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1 Patrick Leigh Fermor is most often associated with Greece, which inspired the travel books that established his fame. However, the 'Great Trudge' of 1933-1934 allowed Leigh Fermor to discover another important country, Rumania, which would later be evoked in *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986) and *The Broken Road* (2013). It was in Bucharest that the young Englishman made the life-changing discovery of a Francophile and aristocratic milieu which was also frequented by an established writer and diplomat, Paul Morand (1888-1976), himself married to a former Rumanian princess. Despite such an overlap of life and work, these major figures of travel writing have, until now, escaped comparison. Drawing upon published sources, but also the authors' private papers, we will therefore explore these visitors' representations of Rumania and the evolution of their long and passionate relationship with that country. Striking similarities apart, the biggest difference between these two travellers is, we argue, the time and purpose of their writing. That said, Leigh Fermor and Morand, albeit of different generations and nations, are united by the vicissitudes of twentieth-century Rumanian and European history, and by the fate of the doomed milieu they became entangled with.

Leigh Fermor's (re)discovery of Rumania

2 In December 1933, the 18-year-old Patrick Leigh Fermor, a middle-class misfit who had failed to find his way in study, work or the army, set out from the Hook of Holland on a 'Great Trudge' which would terminate in Constantinople. He remembered thus his motivations:

> To change scenery; abandon London and England and set across Europe like a tramp – or, as I characteristically phrased it to myself, like a pilgrim or a palmer, an

> errant scholar, a broken knight or the hero of The Cloister and the Hearth!... A new life! Freedom! Something to write about! (Leigh Fermor 1977, 12).

3 With the help of letters of introduction and a daily allowance from his divorced parents, he crossed a continent that bore the scars of the Great War and over which now loomed the shadow of Nazism. But the naïve insouciance of this young innocent abroad, either sleeping outdoors or benefitting from the kindness of strangers, contributes to the magic of what Colin Thubron and Artemis Cooper describe as 'the dream odyssey of every footloose student' (Leigh Fermor 2013, xi).

4 However, Leigh Fermor only returned to this episode in the sixties, and the published account began to appear in 1977, with *A Time of Gifts*. One major obstacle to writing this memoir was the loss of his diaries: the first was stolen in a Munich youth hostel in early 1934, while others were placed in the Harrod's depository, London, during the Second World War, then destroyed as unclaimed. The only surviving document, what would come to be known as the 'Green Diary', had been left behind in Baleni, the family home of his Rumanian lover Balasha Cantacuzene, after the outbreak of the Second World War. It was during a return visit to Rumania in 1965 that Balasha presented him with the diary, which she had put in her luggage in 1949 when evicted by the new Communist authorities. Leigh Fermor therefore revisited this youthful journey with the inevitable lacunae of memory, and in the aftermath of the catastrophic upheavals of the mid-twentieth century.

5 In the sequel, *Between the Woods and the Water*, Leigh Fermor crosses the sixth frontier of his journey, at Curtici, on 27 April 1934. In Greater Rumania, he discovers lands affected by the consequences of the Treaty of Trianon. The marches of Transylvania are 'the most resented frontier in Europe and recent conversations in Hungary had cloaked it with an added shadow of menace' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 83). Recommended by Count Pal Teleki, the Hungarian geographer and politician, Leigh Fermor first sojourns with a Magyar aristocracy washed up by frontier changes and agrarian reform, most memorably 'Istvan', whose real name was Elemer von Klobuszizky.

6 As Leigh Fermor moves south, he accustoms himself to a Rumanian language that is both other and familiar: 'How odd to find this Latin speech marooned so far from its kindred!' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 85). He also moves into a socio-economic otherness: 'The industrial revolution had left these regions untouched and the rhythm of life had remained many decades behind the pace of the West' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 89). Crossing these debateable lands, devouring erudite conversation and country house libraries, he assesses the competing Hungarian and Rumanian claims on Transylvania. One side insisting on a vacuum to fill, the other considering this territory an ethnic hotbed, the young Briton politely concludes that 'justice to both sides was and is impossible' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 90).

7 If Leigh Fermor displays an equal affection for his Hungarian and Rumanian hosts, concluding on an agreement to differ, he is no stranger to other, darker forms of difference. On crossing the frontier, he immediately comes across wandering Jews and threatening packs of wild dogs, the latter providing one of the few moments in Leigh Fermor's saga where fear enters his world. Gypsies in particular, constrained by a history of poverty and oppression, contrast with the would-be 'Gypsy Scholar', who attempts to communicate with them through fragments of Hindi and Romany taken from George Borrow's *Lavengro*. As Dan H. Popescu points out, 'the potential threat of the world is transferred to those who have for centuries lived in the closest proximity

of nature' (Popescu 2012, 98). The gypsies are not travellers like any others: an abrupt 'swarm' of gypsy girls assaults the masculine prey (Leigh Fermor 1986, 66). The non-gypsy travellers are 'entangled in cries and supplication and a mesh of arms like brown tendrils'. The socio-economic dimension, in this case extreme poverty, is foregrounded, as they 'could only [be] unloose[d] by flinging coins beyond their heads like confetti' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 143). The gypsies are an overwhelming and aggressive presence, from suckling infants to wild-looking men, with 'matted blue-black locks falling to their shoulders and eyes like men-eaters', and women 'like tattered mendicant rainbows' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 141).

8 But if gypsies play the role of an internal other that fascinates and repels the traveller, their threat is limited. Beggars may besiege, but, generally, the nomads are tame and occupy the background of Leigh Fermor's account, either passing by or waiting to be summoned by the owner of the land. In retrospect, this fatalism also has a sense of foreboding, shared by the aristocrats and Jews whom Leigh Fermor meets on his way. Forty years after the fact he wrote:

> Every part of Europe I had crossed so far was to be torn and shattered by the war; indeed, except for that last stage before the Turkish frontier, all the countries traversed by this journey were fought over a few years later by two mercilessly destructive powers; and when war broke out, all these friends vanished into sudden darkness (Leigh Fermor 1986, 105).

9 War, genocide and expropriation are not the only things ravaging this part of the world. *Between the Woods and the Water* concludes with thoughts at a café table between the Kazan and the Iron Gates, as he contemplates the immense ferro-concrete dams and hydro-electric power plants built by Rumania and its socialist neighbour Yugoslavia. 'Progress,' he laments, 'has now placed the whole of this landscape under water [...] In everything but economics, the damage is irreparable' (Leigh Fermor 1986, 241-42).

Leigh Fermor's Bucharest

10 The Green Diary, written in a spare, telegraphic style far from Leigh Fermor's highly wrought published prose, gives a sense of his youthful reaction to the discovery of Rumania's capital in late October 1934, where he arrives armed with letters of introduction to various aristocrats, including one Angy Dancos, whom he had flirted with in Transylvania. In his first entry, he notes:

> Bucharest amazing town, almost like London or Paris, not like Sofia, a huge village. Wandered round ages, soaking it in. Lights, cars everything. *Lively* town. Went to cinema, where was a cabaret, extraordinarily improper, very funny, gay people... Slept on divan[1].

The following day,

> wandered round about, down Calea Victoriei, past the Royal Palace (the Guards astonished me). All the officers in padded shoulders, blimey... Danco's, Angy not there, but stepson. He took me to her dressmaker's. She looked so sweet, very chic and Parisian. Sue seemed pleased to see me (*ravie – mais* ravie *de vous voir*)... In evening prowled around, fell in with amusing cynical Jewboy, who took me to see the brothel quarter, Rumania's Pride. I've never seen anything so sordid; Presburg couldn't compare. Very late to sordid little hotel[2].

11 There will be lunch at Terminus, a limousine to Sinaia, visits to the Golf Club with Marcelle Catargi, Count O'Kelly, and the Swiss baron Sonnenberger, among others.

French is spoken all the time. Despite the Nazis' coming to power, there is little sense of tension between the Legations. Thus, Leigh Fermor

> phoned German Legation for Joey [Josias] v. Rantzau, he sounded delighted, asked me to dinner. Topping chap. Went round, jolly, sunny flat in Legation, overlooking trees of Strada Victor Emmanuel. Perfect taste, not a bit pompous... sat over whisky and pipes, talking politics and books into the small hours[3].

12 Indeed, days later, he and Joey have luncheon at the British Legation, in the company of a French diplomat and Prince Antoine Bibesco. There is *La Bohème* at the opera: 'Angy: most beautiful woman in theatre, which is saying a lot, as Rumanian standard of feminine beauty very high. Some amazing cavalry officers uniform there'[4].That said, at another luncheon, the three princesses Stirbey 'look rather dull, very tall. Odd Rumanians. Nicky Chrissoveloni – grand'[5]. There is also much time for drinking whisky, talking, and reading in bed, notably Hugh Seton-Watson's history of Rumania. The social whirlwind extends into November: luncheon with Albanians, 'great Anglophiles, sons to Eton, *Punch* every week, etc' [6], and a trip to Snagov with one Tadeusz von Kobylanski: 'went back in the sunset. He's really charming like most Poles, obviously a bit homosexual, but it doesn't obtrude'[7]. There remains time for dancing and charades with Nicky Chrissoveloni and Hélène Mavrocordato, and one last walk to the Country Club. On 13 November, he writes: 'Packed up, telephoned goodbye to everyone... Sordid prowl, then more sordid tart, and back to hotel. Bad business. Dear old Bukarest [sic]. Everyone's been so nice here!'[8].

13 The Green Diary contrasts in content and style with Leigh Fermor's *Broken Road*, written from the 1980s onwards and only published after his death. The latter evokes in more depth his discovery of the Rumanian capital:

> Bucharest floated above the level horizon in the late afternoon, a sprawling irregular mass which lost whatever shape or skyline it possessed in the fall of night, and in a sense, vanished again. The distant suggestion of a skyscraper or two and a scattering of tall chimneys sank below the rising darkness of the outskirts, and its amorphous aspect became vaguer still through the light, steamy rain. Never had the frontier between country and town, always a gradual transition to foot-travellers, been more indistinct (Leigh Fermor 2013, 156).

14 These *mahalas* (roughly translated from Rumanian as slums or ghettos) are 'a fluid region; nothing was static; everything was vestigial or inchoate' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 157). The passage of a klaxoning Packard limousine through the muddy street reinforces a sense of dualism, of Bucharest on the cusp of East and West, modernity and tradition: 'These southern tentacles of the capital seemed to belong to a mixture of Samarkand and Detroit' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 158). The young Englishman heads, moth-like, for the beckoning metropolitan glare, but loses direction. He finds digs in the pretentiously named Savoi-Ritz, which offers '*confort moderne*' but also, the apparently naïve innocent abroad soon discovers, more carnal comforts.

15 This first, farcical stay in a *maison de passe* therefore departs from the brothel-going exploits alluded to in The Green Diary. However, the rest of the section on Bucharest develops on the frantic socialising indicated in his notes. Discovering the modern core of *Micul Paris*, Calea Victoriei, he is amazed, excited, dazzled and rather nonplussed by the smartness of the inhabitants, the grandeur of the cars, the shops with modernistic lettering, the rainbow tangle of electric signs and polyglot flutter of periodicals. Suddenly landed in this urban hubbub, after days trudging across the Wallachian plain, Leigh Fermor feels 'alien and uprooted, and filled with the feelings of dazzled

bewilderment, uncouthness and solitude that must overcome a peasant in a similar plight' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 162).

16 Collecting several letters at the *poste restante* and a magic canvas envelope with some money, Leigh Fermor makes off for another bar to observe the flamboyant inhabitants of this Babylon. He becomes acquainted with Josias von Rantzau and, in the sybaritic and bookish retreat of the young German diplomat's flat, reads Seton-Watson, but also Nicolae Iorga, Alexandro Xenopol, Marthe Bibesco, Panait Istrati and Mihai Eminescu. Through such exposure, everything to do with Rumania 'began to cast a contradictory and powerful spell' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 177).

17 As in the previous volumes, history weighs like a nightmare on Leigh Fermor's recollections. The German Minister to Bucharest, Count Friedrich Werner von Schulenburg, will be executed for complicity in the July 1944 plot against Hitler. As already indicated in the Green Diary, several times during this stay, Leigh Fermor and 'Joey' spend the evening with a girl called Marcelle Catargi, the daughter of a great boyar. We learn that she committed suicide 'at the time of the last great and definitive shift of power in Eastern Europe' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 179). Leigh Fermor would visit the Rantzau family home near Hamburg in 1945, only to find the Russians had captured him. Nearly all the people in this book, it turns out, 'were attached to trails of powder which were already invisibly burning, to explode during the next decade and a half, in unhappy endings' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 180).

18 It is the doomed Rumanian aristocratic milieu, soaked in French civilisation and using French for everyday conversation, which Leigh Fermor evokes and celebrates in these pages. It is thanks to this sophisticated social class that, he claims,

> the principalities began to emerge from despotism and its more villainous abuses, secured the abolition of serfdom, enlarged the suffrage, and prepared the path for a Western constitution and democratic institutions (Leigh Fermor 2013, 183).

Leigh Fermor is 'fascinated and obsessed with boyars and voivodes. Their names, too, all seemed to carry a resonance of splendour and remoteness…' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 184). Significantly, the common people briefly encountered by the young traveller throughout the trilogy are seldom graced with first names, let alone surnames. In a moment of retrospective lucidity, Leigh Fermor rightly remarks that 'the reader at this point might jump to the conclusion that I was suffering from an acute sense of class feeling' (Leigh Fermor 2013, 184).

19 Leigh Fermor makes this mixture of late Byzantium and Proustian France his temporary home. He is seduced by the anti-philistinism:

> It was exciting and impressive to hear the name Marcel dropped so easily, and to realise that Anna, who seemed to be everyone's cousin, was the comtesse de Noailles; that Paul, if it was not Morand, who had married Hélène Soutzo, was Valéry; that 'Jean' was Cocteau and that Léon-Paul was Fargue (Leigh Fermor 2013,188).

20 This is a world of entertaining and parties and tremendous luncheons, in a geography of privilege and power that stretches from the restaurant Capsa to the Palaces of Mogosoaia and Peles, a 'Carpathian Balmoral', where the teenager encounters such luminaries as Grigore Gafencu, Antoine Bibesco and members of mighty boyar families like the Cantacuzenes, Stirbeys and Sturdzas. But again, the time of writing, during the last years of the Communist dictatorship, transforms such characters into ghosts of a doomed world:

> It is best to stick to the rule: 'either out [of Rumania] or dead'. Of the above names, six belong to the first category, nine to the second. Of the names inside Rumania that should complete this list, one or two have disappeared into a limbo without tidings; the others, about whom their friends know all too well, exist in great distress and poverty, sentenced by geography and the post-war order, and by those who administer it (Leigh Fermor 2013, 190).

Leigh Fermor's and Morand's Rumania

21 The names mentioned above, especially that of Nicky Chrissoveloni, show that Leigh Fermor was frequenting the same circles as writer-diplomat Paul Morand, who was married to Nicky's aunt, Hélène Chrissoveloni, formerly the Princess Soutzo. Leigh Fermor would only make the acquaintance of Morand when he returned to Rumania later in the 1930s, but their representations of Rumania, and especially Bucharest, merit comparison. In *Bucarest* (1935), Morand, like Leigh Fermor, presents them as ambiguous places, between Latin West and Orthodox East, between modernity and backwardness.

22 Unlike vertical New York, the subject of a previous *portrait de ville*, Morand's Bucharest is a horizontal city which, with its *mahalas*, merges into the countryside:

> *on dirait [...] un phénomène physique décroissant, une vive couleur qui se dégrade jusqu'au blanc, une onde qui s'affaiblit et se perd. Les maisons très serrées et très hautes au centre s'en vont vers la périphérie en s'espaçant et s'abaissant graduellement jusqu'à fondre en masures et finir dans le sol en bauges à tziganes (Morand 1935, 128-29).*

23 For all its modern façade, Bucharest, like the rest of the country, combines West and East: in the *mahala*, '*la ville européenne s'évanouit et l'Asie commence*' (Morand 1935, 129). This Rumanian Orient is not simply imbued with picturesque charm. The gypsies who enchant Rumanians with their *lautar* tunes are representative of '*l'Extrême-Orient de ce proche Orient*', primitive humans who run through the streets of Bucharest '*sur leurs souples orteils de singes*' (Morand 1935, 141). As with Leigh Fermor, these resident others fascinate but also repel. Such extremists cannot be assimiliated: '*ils sont d'une autre race, une race aux lèvres violettes, aux yeux bistrés, aux oreilles et aux nuques négroïdes, à la sclérotique jaunâtre, aux cheveux bouclés*' (Morand 1935, 142). This negative, menacing Orient can also be found in the Jewish quarter down by the Dambovitza river: '*qui ne les a vu s'efforcer de vendre [...] ne peut comprendre l'invasion actuelle de la France par les Orientaux*' (Morand 1935, 160-61). Nevertheless, exploring the 'charming anarchy ('*anarchie charmante*', Morand 1935, 138) of the Rumanian capital, hobnobbing over extravagant luncheons with aristocrats, politicians and intellectuals, Morand discovers and celebrates a certain nonchalance that contrasts with western neuroses, a refuge from the ravages of the Wall Street crash: '*Nous irons [...] à Bucarest pour faire, au déclin de notre civilisation capitaliste, une cure d'insouciance*' (Morand 1935, 288).

24 In their accounts, both Leigh Fermor and Morand give a sanitised vision of Bucharest and Rumania at that time. Granted, Leigh Fermor is sensitive to the 'deep-rooted and almost universal' anti-Semitism of the Rumanians (Leigh Fermor 2013, 148). However, in both authors' accounts, political extremism of left and right is at bay – '*la IIIème Internationale s'est fatiguée de payer*', Morand is told (Morand 1935, 267) – or passed over in silence. We can find no mention of important recent events such as the railwaymen strike in 'Red Grivitza', or the Iron Guard's assassination of Ion Gheorghe Duca, the Liberal Prime Minister who had outlawed them. There are no signs of

disharmony in the *mahalas* or between the *mahalas* and the westernising city centre. Indeed, Morand's focus on the francophone elite and his taste for picturesque backwardness contributed to the mixed reception of his book in Rumania[9].

25 Leigh Fermor and Morand's portrayals of Rumania therefore overlap considerably, though there is no indication in Leigh Fermor's papers that Morand's book influenced his writing. The crucial difference between these two accounts is the time of writing and publication. A seasoned diplomat and internationally famous writer, Paul Morand is writing *à vif* for a French and francophone Rumanian readership. His book is both a picturesque tableau of Rumania and an acute piece of political and geopolitical analysis. Morand observes the growing attraction of Nazi Germany on the Rumanian elites, while Francophiles express their fear of being abandoned by Paris: '*sans la France, la Grande Roumanie ne pourrait continuer à exister*' (Morand 1935, 267). Less than twenty years after the Great War, and in the economic and political turmoil of the mid-thirties, Morand is inciting France to revive and sustain its historical friendship with a long-suffering nation which, as member of the Petite Entente, has become a glowing example of stability in the Balkans. As for Leigh Fermor, with his references to doomed, sometimes unnameable acquaintances, he is writing an elegy to a lost world.

The Fall of a World

26 In 1935, Patrick Leigh Fermor returned to Rumania with the aristocratic painter Balasha Cantacuzene, whom he had met in Athens[10]. He would spend two sojourns of a year each in her family's country house at Baleni. Here, during the winter of 1938-39, Leigh Fermor translated Morand's *Isabeau de Bavière, femme de Charles VI*, which, after the war, he would fail to get accepted by his publisher John Murray (Cooper 2012, 118). Another guest to this retreat was the Franco-Rumanian diplomat and polymath Matila Ghyka, author of *Le Nombre d'or* and friend of Morand (the one appearance of Leigh Fermor in the Morand archives is a postcard to Hélène saying that he had met Ghyka by chance at Capsa)[11]. In his introduction to Ghyka's memoirs, *The World Mine Oyster*, Leigh Fermor evoked this lost world, and especially the last summer he spent there before the outbreak of the Second World War.

27 A francophone island of erudition and cosmopolitan sophistication, Baleni had maintained its charm, despite the effects of post-war agrarian reform:

> surrounded by friendly peasants, the rambling manor-house still remained, and this was a faraway refuge, many miles from anywhere, of beauty, intelligence, originality and kindness. A peculiar and potent magic pervaded this house and all its inhabitants (Ghyka 1961, xviii).

28 However, these summer months 'succeeded each other all too fast and the evil omens multiplied; the storks that gathered from every roof and chimney to join the ragged south-bound armada were leaving a doomed Europe' (Ghyka 1961, xix)[12]. It is after a mushroom-gathering picnic that Leigh Fermor learns that war has been declared. On the night of 3 September 1939, Leigh Fermor and his friend Henry Nevile leave for Bucharest to enlist in England. They promise to be back in a few months.

29 In 1940, the dismemberment of Greater Rumania brought the Soviet frontier to within twenty kilometres of Baleni. But it was an earthquake, on 2 March 1940, that destroyed the country house. Four years later, Balasha wrote (in French) an elegy to this remote refuge:

Vastes chambres, j'écoute ce soir votre silence
Telle un fantôme, j'ouvre vos portes sans bruit
Et je retrouve des ans toute la cadence
Toutes les arcades des jours et des nuits
[...]
Lentement je traverse les portes
De cet innombrable passé
Et me perds dans la pénombre
Des allées abandonnées[13]

30 Dear friends were now very far away: Ghyka to London, where he joined the Free Rumanians, Leigh Fermor to Crete, where he took part in the daring kidnap of the German General Kreipe. As for Paul Morand, he took the side of Vichy and would be its ambassador to Bucharest between July 1943 and April 1944. There, he found himself in conflict with a Legation and high Rumanian society with strong Gaullist sympathies, while Hélène's unabashed pro-Nazism got a hostile reception. In his reports to Vichy, Morand observed with morbid fascination the inexorable advance of the Red Army, concluding that the real winner of the conflict was Russia, thus fulfilling the prophecies of Dostoyevsky[14].

31 In the post-Yalta era, there was no future for the Francophile aristocrats that Leigh Fermor and Morand knew. Balasha re-established contact with Leigh Fermor, but her letters evoke the disintegration of a world. To destruction by earthquake was added yet more expropriation. From Baleni, on 27 January 1946, she wrote: 'the house was so destroyed by the earthquake of 1940, that we have never been able to repair it yet. You know that the land has been taken away from us, and with what is left these will not be enough to live on, even modestly'[15]. Naively, in their correspondence, Balasha and her cousin Alexandru Mourouzi, a former navy officer, described to Leigh Fermor their plans to escape Rumania via the Black Sea. On 1 July 1947, she wrote:

> It will be extremely difficult not only when we get somewhere else, but to leave here at all. Sometimes Paddy, I wake up with a jumping in my stomach at the idea of getting out. We have tried so often. Now, building a small craft we hope to leave in a month's time. The expense is terrific, yet we are ready to spend our last penny on it[16].

32 With a view to this escape, Balasha and Mourouzi made contacts in Constantza, including a mechanic who had once repaired tractors at Baleni. Ironically, he was a new member of the Rumanian Communist Party. The plan was to buy a boat for 'dolphin fishing' then sail it to Istanbul. Unsurprisingly, they were quickly arrested and imprisoned for trying to escape, though they were released three days later.

33 In the context of the imminent Communist seizure of power, the punishment meted out to Balasha and Alexandru was very mild: they did not experience the forced labour, torture and execution suffered by many 'enemies of the people' after the proclamation of the People's Republic in 1948. 1949 saw the launch of collectivisation, including the final eviction of Baleni and the partial destruction of the immense library that Leigh Fermor had feasted on. The Banque Chrissoveloni had already become the People's Bank of Rumania. In December 1952, Hélène Morand evoked in a letter the treatment of her kind by the new regime:

> *Dans les rues de Bucarest, sévit la chasse à l'homme. Paulette et son mari se couchent le soir tout habillés car c'est la nuit que se font les enlèvements. On a arrêté le mois dernier 5 000 personnes à Bucarest. Ileana Stourdza, la belle-fille d'Olga, est désespérée ; on lui a*

> *enlevé son fils qui n'a, je crois, que douze ans. Dire que cela pourrait arriver aux enfants de mon neveu Nicky*[17] *!*

34 Nevertheless, from the mid-fifties onwards, East-West détente and the Cyprus crisis allowed surviving 'Phanariots' (descendants of Greek noblemen under the Ottoman Empire) to leave Rumania thanks to their Greek passports, as well as diplomatic pressure and, most importantly, money paid to the Rumanian government by Hélène Morand through Anglo-Swiss intermediaries. In 1960, Nicky Chrissoveloni finally arrived in Athens. Paul Morand informed his friend and fellow writer and wartime collaborator, Jacques Chardonne, that, after three years' hard labour on the Danube 'Canal of Death', this former Trinity College, Cambridge, rugby captain weighed only 43 kilos. His fate confirmed the savagery of the Russians, whom, according to Morand, Pierre Laval had justly described as '*des bêtes féroces*'[18]. Alexandru Mourouzi reached Greece in 1963.

35 Rumania now seemed lost to these *ci-devant*. Already, in 1965, Nicky Chrissoveloni wrote wistfully to his aunt from the Athens Office of Hambros Bank: '*moi aussi je pense souvent à la douceur de vivre de Bucarest d'autrefois et aux nombreux amis que nous y avons laissés*'[19]. That said, Nicky, like his long-lost friend, Patrick Leigh Fermor, felt at home in the Greece of the Colonels. On 3 April 1969, Morand wrote in his diary:

> *Nicky à dîner, hier. Arrivé d'Athènes dans l'après-midi. 'Impossible de le dire, ni en France ni à Londres, mais tout fonctionne à merveille sous les colonels, le peuple ravi, plus de grèves, le drachme, monnaie la plus forte du monde, etc.' (Morand 2001, 168).*

36 Such sentiments were shared by another mutual friend of Morand and Leigh Fermor who had exiled himself to Greece, Michel Déon.

37 But Rumania did not disappear entirely from Morand's writings. In 1962, *Paris-Match* published an article by Morand on the Danube, in which he cast a melancholy look back on his inter-war experience as a diplomat: *'la guerre a soufflé sur tout cela et l'Europe s'est laissé chasser de cet avant-poste diplomatique, comme de tout l'Orient*' (Morand 1972, 59). Nevertheless, he hoped, faintly, that a new bridge at Giurgiu, on the Rumanian-Bulgarian frontier, could symbolise a more harmonious world: '*il porte le beau nom de Pont de l'Amitié... seulement, nul n'a le droit d'en approcher. Faisons le vœu qu'avec l'accélération – ou la décélération – de l'Histoire, le Pont de l'Amitié soit un jour ouvert à tous les hommes*' (Morand 1972, 61). This hardly extinguished Morand's over-riding bitterness, pessimism and nostalgia. Two years later, he bade adieu to the Orient-Express he had once travelled on with aristocratic Rumanian friends like Antoine Bibesco:

> *L'Orient-Express disparaît, tué par l'avion à cent passagers. La société pour laquelle il avait été créé est morte : le passeport et ses visas, la guerre des changes, les nouvelles murailles de Chine l'ont achevé (Morand 1994, 55).*

38 As Charlotte Boulay points out, in the face of the 'loss' of Rumania, and the general consequences of the Second World War, Morand transferred his affinities to Spain, which seemed to resist the rhythms of modernity[20]. An ironic twist for a writer once so associated with *la vitesse*, and whose first major literary representation of Rumania was the novella *Flèche d'Orient* (1932), brought out to mark the opening of an air link between Paris and Bucharest. *L'homme pressé* did not 'trudge'.

Paddy's Return

39 It was also an essay on the Danube, commissioned by *Holiday*, that brought Leigh Fermor back to Rumania, in 1965. Now an internationally famous travel-writer, Leigh Fermor benefitted from a time of relative liberalisation and, notably, Franco-Rumanian *rapprochement*, to revisit places on his 'Great Trudge' and arrange a reunion with Balasha and her sister, Hélène Donici, known as 'Pomme'. On 5 November 1964, Pomme's knowledge of life beyond the Iron Curtain was evidently still filtered through the French communist daily *L'Humanité*, but she was able to pass judgment on contemporary French intellectual life: 'Camus leaves me cold, Sartre is so confused in the head'. '*Vino repede*, Paddy!', she concluded[21]. Just before his departure for Rumania, Balasha forewarned her former lover of the ravages of time: 'I have grown into a very old-looking Boodle after these 26 years. But I have no family and the joy of seeing you and hearing your news vastly compensates the sadness of age'[22].

40 In an article for the right-wing *Daily Telegraph*, published soon after the fall of Ceausescu, Leigh Fermor described, not without melodrama – and 'class feeling' –, his reunion with the fallen aristocratic sisters in an attic in Pucioasa, near Tirguviste, where they had been assigned since the eviction from Baleni in 1949:

> Their horrible vicissitudes were narrated with detachment and speed: time was short and there were only brief pauses for sleep on a couple of chairs. The rest of our 48 hours – we dared risk no more – were filled with pre-war memories, the lives of all out friends, and a great deal of laughter. It was a miraculous reunion. The sisters now eked out their state pittance by teaching French and English (Leigh Fermor 1990a, II).

It was also around this time that Leigh Fermor learned of the fate of his old Hungarian friends in Transylvania:

> They had been evicted with special ruthlessness. 'Istvan' told me by letter that he had left for Hungary (I found him at last in a workman's flat in Budapest, grinding away at the translation of engineering manuals from English to Magyar) (Leigh Fermor 1990a, II).

Leigh Fermor would also eventually correspond with his other companion on the largely auto-fictional 'triple fugue' in *Between the Woods and the Water*, 'Angela' (real name Xenia Csernovits), who was now a retired factory worker, also living in Budapest[23].

41 After this emotional reunion, Balasha wrote: 'It was marvellous to find you so unchanged after these 26 years of separation'. Pomme added: 'You fell into our lives for 24 hours like a comet from another galaxy, like a hot flame which will light up for a long time our lives – which are sometimes lonely and monotonous'[24]. At the same time, the fragility of the geopolitical situation, and its possible ramifications for Leigh Fermor's Rumanian and Hungarian friends, meant self-censorship was necessary in the published version of Leigh Fermor's journey down the Danube. Obviously, there could be no mention of his 'clandestine' trip. What's more, the uncut manuscript shows deletions of potentially sensitive material. Thus, from the Hungarian section, Leigh Fermor omits growing signs of liberalization in Budapest and the following encounter:

> The handsome bus conductress's trousers and beret gave her a dashing look. She was a Rumanian from one of the bilingual villages of Transylvania, where she had been a schoolmistress... She sat down for a chat. What was it like in Rumania? Awful, she said, blowing out a puff of smoke. She had left a couple of years ago and

> settled in Pest, where things were far easier; better a conductress here than a schoolmistress there[25].

His 'class feeling' also needed to be suppressed:

> There is something suspect in the declaration of fondness for the aristocrats and the peasants of a foreign country; but this one is free of any damaging corollary; in those remote dales and woods, there was no-one else.... I felt half trespasser and half spectre[26].

42 Nevertheless, this was an intense period of exchanges. 'Darling Paddy' sent the sisters countless books, in English and French, to break down their isolation. An indication of cultural opening in the early years of Ceaușescu's Rumania was revealed by one letter from Balasha: 'Yesterday, Pomme and I went to a French film and it was so terribly funny that Pomme came out with tears of laughter streaming down her cheeks... And sometimes Pomme and I, very optimistic, go to an English film'[27]. There was the opportunity to travel to Paris, London and Greece. But still there was a sense of irredeemable loss: 'It's very strange but all of those who shared our life in Baleni are no more. Either far away, or dead... all of you who knew us so well are so far away in space or time'[28]. Certainly, De Gaulle's State Visit in May 1968 was 'a delirium. Rumanians have always loved France'[29]. But, at the end of 1969, Balasha wrote to Leigh Fermor: 'Books are our only great joy'[30].

Beyond the Shadow

43 In 1976, Balasha died of breast cancer. Pomme followed her four years later. But Leigh Fermor's links with Rumania remained strong and spurred on his writing. In the mid-eighties, as he worked on *Between the Woods and the Water*, he retraced his 1934 Transylvanian route. Of the aristocratic homes that had offered him hospitality, Count Tibor's place 'had a forlorn and unkempt look: a lunatic asylum', while the home of 'Istvan'

> was inhabited by an engaging Rumanian couple running an experimental bamboo plantation: their eyes lit up when they heard Elemer's name. They had never met him, but his fame lingered in the valley like a myth (Leigh Fermor 1990, 1).

44 Despite the stifling hold of the Securitate secret police, he came across signs of discontent. In a hired Dacia, he gave a lift to a harvester who told him:

> 'Well they are very bad, *foarte rau*! We haven't got enough to eat, it's getting worse, we're worked to death, we live like slaves and it's all for nothing.' He lifted the sickle in his lap: 'Do you think this belongs to me? Nothing does.' A fierce diatribe of resentment and hatred came pouring out (Leigh Fermor 1990, II).

45 He also gave a lift to two well-fed young men with trilbies and briefcases, who answered his questions with fulsome praise of the country's prosperity. On passing food queues, Leigh Fermor remarked: 'I never saw them before the war'. Their reply: 'Rumania's a poor country' (Leigh Fermor 1990, II). That said, Leigh Fermor rightly observed that public dissent was limited to the 1987 workers demonstrations in Brasov and the solitary voice of Doina Cornea, professor of French at the University of Cluj. The Revolution of 1989 therefore came clean out of the blue. But Leigh Fermor did not attribute this to a lack of courage, and cited the words of his captured German General, who served alongside Rumanians on the Eastern Front: they were 'totally fearless in attack, and if they had to hold a point in defence, they were like gun-dogs! Sometimes till they were all killed' (Leigh Fermor 1990, II).

46 Paul Morand had also died in 1976, and was buried with Hélène in the Greek Orthodox cemetery of Trieste, close to the Iron Curtain still dividing East and West. But, in 1990, *Bucarest* was re-published by Plon. The back cover expressed nostalgia, exoticism and a celebration of Franco-Rumanian *retrouvailles*:

> *Bucarest, porte de l'Orient [...] Portrait d'une ville raffinée et excentrique, chargée d'histoire, voyage dans l'Europe d'avant-guerre. Paul Morand a voulu faire avec* Bucarest, *publié en 1935, "le portrait d'une jolie femme". A redécouvrir à l'heure où Bucarest, après avoir été livrée au saccage d'un dictateur, retrouve la liberté... (Morand 1990).*

47 Ten years later, a Rumanian edition finally appeared. In his introduction, the translator and critic Ion Pop presented Morand's book as a warm and humorous description of a city and a people to which the author was deeply attached (Morand 2000). Thus, Pop passed over the more problematic ethnic and reactionary perspectives expressed by Morand in 1935.

48 In the spring of 1990, Leigh Fermor returned to Rumania to research his articles for the *Daily Telegraph*. By their very titles, both articles, 'Travels in a land before darkness fell' and 'Ghosts that haunt the new dawn', indicated the melodramatic and elegiac nature of Leigh Fermor's vision of Rumania. The description of his approach to Bucharest contrasted strikingly with that given in the Green Diary and *The Broken Road*: 'Seen through the windows of the night plane, Bucharest glimmered into being as dimly as a candle-lit city under siege' (Leigh Fermor 1990a, I). Leigh Fermor looked principally backwards, to Baleni, where he found 'some forbidding industrial buildings, already old and battered, had gone up in its place and the trees had all been cut down' (Leigh Fermor 1990b, II). He ended on the last day of peace in 1939 with the Cantacuzene sisters, Matila Ghyka and other friends, a little society scattered forever.

49 The ghosts of Leigh Fermor's Rumania have begun to re-appear. In 2013, the V.I. Urechia municipal library of Galatz held an exhibition on what was left of the Baleni library, transferred there in 1950. The Rumanian translations of *Between the Woods and the Water* and *The Broken Road* were published by Humanitas in 2016. The books' paratexts indicate the international appeal of Leigh Fermor: he is 'a cross between Indiana Jones, James Bond and Graham Greene' (Leigh Fermor 2016). However, the paratexts go on, there is a more local attraction to this text: 'Inter-war Transylvania seen through the eyes of the foreign traveller appears to us now like a far off country, detached from legend and myth'. In her preface, Georgeta Filitti, the translator of *The Broken Road*, praised the British author's ability to evoke the image of the other, this other being *homo balkanicus*. There was also another sense of otherness inflicted by the passage of time: in a footnote concerning the names of Rumanian aristocrats the author spent time with, Filitti informed the young reader that 'at the time when Leigh Fermor [wrote] these lines, Rumania was under a brutal communist regime' (Leigh Fermor 2016, 214).

Conclusion

50 'Half-trespasser and half-spectre' is, to varying extents, an accurate description of Leigh Fermor and Morand in their relationships to Rumania as well as of the people whom they frequented. As travellers, both Leigh Fermor and Morand were synchronically encroaching upon different cultures and spaces. That said, unlike Leigh Fermor, Morand the famous writer-diplomat was publicly engaging with inter-war

geopolitics as well as entertaining (and provoking) his considerable readership. A generation younger, Leigh Fermor the memorialist was diachronically striving to mend roads that were broken by that very geopolitics. Those kind strangers who became hosts, friends and lovers (and, in Morand's case, relatives) were themselves subject to, and active subjects in, brutal shifts of property and power. It is this succession of expropriations and hauntings which lends pathos to the great trudge of an 'errant scholar'. At the same time, this does not let us forget, in the case of Morand and part of his Rumanian milieu, a disastrous dalliance with fascism and war.

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NOTES

1. National Library of Scotland (NLS). Patrick Leigh Fermor papers, Acc. 13338/471, 24 October 1934, f. 1097.

2. *Ibid.*, 25 October 1934, f. 1098-1099.

3. *Ibid.*, 28 October 1934, f. 1103-1104.

4. *Ibid.*, 2 November 1934, f. 1108.

5. *Ibid.*, 5 November 1934, f. 1111.

6. *Ibid.*, 8 November 1934, f. 1114.

7. *Ibid.*, 9 November 1934, f. 1115.

8. *Ibid.*, 13 November 1934, f. 1119-1120.

9. See Gavin Bowd, *Paul Morand et la Roumanie*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2002, 42-46.

10. See Alan Ogden, *The Vagabond and the Princess. Paddy Leigh Fermor in Romania*, London, Nine Elms Books, 2018.

11. Académie française (AF) : Fonds Morand, 2 AP 7 HM 496, Patrick Leigh Fermor to Hélène Morand, undated.

12. *Ibid*., p. xix.

13. NLS, Acc. 13338/129.

14. See, for example, Morand's report to Pierre Laval, 'La Marche vers Byzance': Archives du ministère des Affaires étrangères, Nantes, Série Bucarest, Carton 415, 16 December 1943.

15. NLS, Acc. 13338/129, 27 January 1946.

16. Ibid., 1 July 1947.

17. AF : Fonds Morand, 2 AP 7, Hélène Morand to unknown addressee, 1 December 1952.

18. Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire de Lausanne : Fonds Paul Morand, IS 4316, Paul Morand to Jacques Chardonne, 18 December 1959 (emphasis in the original).

19. AF : Fonds Morand, 2 AP 7, Nicky Chrissoveloni to Hélène Morand, 29 April 1965.

20. See Charlotte Boulay, 'Paul Morand et l'Espagne', unpublished doctoral dissertation, Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail, 1992.

21. NLS: Acc. 13338/130, Pomme Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 5 November 1964.

22. Ibid., Balasha Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 30 April 1965.

23. See Gavin Bowd, '"Triple Fugue" revisited: Patrick Leigh Fermor, "Istvan" and "Angela"', *Transylvanian Review*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 3, Autumn 2019, pp. 86-100; Michael O'Sullivan, *Patrick Leigh Fermor, Noble Encounters Between Budapest and Transylvania*, Budapest, Central European University Press, 2018.

24. NLS, Acc. 13338/130, Balasha and Pomme Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 5 June 1965.

25. NLS Acc. 13338/208, f. 57.

26. *Ibid.*, f. 88.

27. NLS, Acc. 13338/130, Balasha Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 21 October 1965.

28. *Ibid.*, Balasha Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 6 June 1967.

29. *Ibid.*, Balasha Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 18 May 1968.

30. *Ibid.*, Balasha Cantacuzene to Patrick Leigh Fermor, 4 December 1969.

ABSTRACTS

The 'Great Trudge' of 1933-1934 allowed Patrick Leigh Fermor to discover Rumania, which would later be evoked in *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986) and *The Broken Road* (2013). It was in Bucharest that the young Englishman made the life-changing discovery of a Francophile and aristocratic milieu which was also frequented by an established writer and diplomat, Paul Morand (1888-1976), himself married to a former Rumanian princess. Despite such an overlap of life and work, these major figures of travel writing have, until now, escaped comparison. Drawing upon published sources, but also the authors' private papers, we will therefore explore these visitors' representations of Rumania and the evolution of their long and passionate relationship with that country. Striking similarities apart, the biggest difference between these two travellers is, we argue, the time and purpose of their writing.

La « Grande Marche » de 1933-1934 permet à Patrick Leigh Fermor de découvrir la Roumanie, ce qu'il évoquera plus tard dans *Between the Woods and the Water* (1986) et *The Broken Road* (2013). C'est à Bucarest que le jeune Anglais fait la connaissance d'un milieu francophile et artistocrate que fréquente aussi le grand écrivain-diplomate Paul Morand (1888-1976), lui-même marié à une ancienne princesse roumaine. Malgré ce chevauchement de deux vies et de deux œuvres, ces deux grandes figures de la littérature voyageuse ont jusqu'ici échappé à la comparaison. Puisant dans des sources publiées, mais aussi dans les fonds privés de ces auteurs, nous explorerons donc leurs représentations de la Roumanie et l'évolution de leurs relations durables et passionnées avec ce pays. Malgré certaines similarités frappantes, nous soutenons que la plus grande différence entre ces deux voyageurs réside dans le moment et le but de leurs écritures.

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Mots-clés: voyage, Roumanie, francophilie, guerre, communisme
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